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INSTRUCTIONS

GIVEN TO

COL. TATE.

(Price Two Pence.)

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AUTHENTIC COPIES
OF THE
INSTRUCTIONS

GIVEN BY

C. L.
Gen. Hoche

TO

COLONEL TATE,

PREVIOUS TO

HIS LANDING ON THE COAST OF

SOUTH WALES,

IN THE BEGINNING OF 1797.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. WRIGHT, NO. 169, PICCADILLY.

1798.



INTRODUCTION.

THE following Papers are authentic Copies of the Instructions which were given by General HOCHÉ to Colonel TATE, an American Officer in the French service, who commanded the expedition to the coast of Wales, in February 1797, and which were found on him after he had surrendered himself a prisoner with his troops at Fishguard.

Extracts from them have appeared in the newspapers, but the stile in which they are written has given rise to doubts of their authenticity. The papers, as printed in the present edition, cannot well be subject to similar doubts, because they are taken from the Appendix to the Report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the treatment of Prisoners of War, before whom they were laid, having been compared with

the originals, and attested by the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department.

They are offered to the public without any comment, and the people of England may see from them, that the real intention of the French is to disunite all ranks of society, and to set the lower classes against the highest, with a view of more effectually destroying both. The more their intentions are known, the more they will be abhorred, and it is therefore with that hope that these papers are submitted to the public.

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INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

COLONEL TATE.

THERE will be placed under the command of Col. Tate, a body of troops, completely organized, to the number of one thousand and fifty, all resolute determined men, with whom he may undertake any thing: They are to be called "La Seconde Legion des Francs."

The legion is completely armed; he will be likewise furnished with fast-going vessels with which he is to proceed, before, with, or after the squadron; the vessels will be victualled for the passage, but the legion will bring on shore nothing but their ammunition, which is to be musquet cartridges.

Col. Tate is to have the command in chief of the legion; the Admiral will give the necessary orders to the officer commanding the naval force, which will proceed up St. George's channel, and the landing is to be effectuated, if possible, in or near Cardigan Bay.

But should Col. Tate, on arriving opposite the mouth of the Severn, learn that the river is little or not at all defended, and that the

wind and tide allow him to sail up, he will endeavour to execute a *coup de main* on Bristol, which is the second city in England for riches and commerce; the destruction of Bristol is of the very last importance, and every possible effort should be made to accomplish it.

For this purpose, it will be proper to reconnoitre the mouth of the Severn, in the day time, and to sail up the Avon at night fall, within five miles of the town, where the landing should be made, on the right bank, in the greatest silence, and the troops being supplied with combustible matter, Col. Tate is to advance rapidly in the dark, on that side of Bristol which may be to windward, and immediately to set fire to that quarter. If the enterprize be conducted with dexterity, it cannot fail to produce the total ruin of the town, the port, the docks, and the vessels, and to strike terror and amazement into the very heart of the capital of England.

This object being fulfilled, Col. Tate will immediately re-embark cross the Severn, and land below Cardiff, which he will leave on his right, and proceed towards Chester and Liverpool, in the manner to be pointed out in these instructions.

During the passage, Col. Tate will take care that the troops observe the most exact discipline, and will recommend to the naval officers to carry a press of sail.

At the moment of the landing, each soldier is to be furnished with one hundred rounds of ammunition, provisions for four days,

days, and a double ration of wine or brandy, to recruit them after the fatigues of the voyage.

Not a moment is to be lost in the debarkation, and the soldiers must carry their ammunition and provisions, until they can secure bât horses; they are never to quit them, and are to take care to supply what may be expended on every possible occasion. For the first two days the legion is to keep in one body, observing not to suffer any to lag in the rear.

Col. Tate will feel the necessity of gaining a close and strong country with all possible speed, and before committing any act of hostility; he will take care to avoid the morasses, as well from regard to the health of the troops, as to avoid being surrounded by the enemy, who would of course endeavour to profit of such a defect in his position.

The expedition under the command of Col. Tate has in view three principal objects: the first is, if possible, to raise an insurrection in the country; the second is, to interrupt and embarrass the commerce of the enemy; and the third is, to prepare and facilitate the way for a descent, by distracting the attention of the English government.

In all countries the poor are the class most prone to insurrection, and this disposition is to be forwarded by distributing money and drink; by inveighing against the government as the cause of the public distress; by recommending and facilitating a rising to plunder

the public stores and magazines, and the property of the rich, whose affluence is the natural subject of envy to the poor.

It is, notwithstanding, to be observed, that however defective may be the morality of the English people, they have still a respect for the laws and their magistrates, even in the moment of insurrection; it will be therefore adviseable to spare, as much as possible, the property of those who may be in any civil function, and even of the country gentlemen; all impositions should be laid on the peers, the men of rank and high fortune, the clergy, those who serve as officers in the army, navy, and especially in the militia: of all such, the country seats, farms, woods, cattle, and corn, should be given up to be plundered by the people: these predatory excursions should be made in different and even distant quarters, by detachments of two or three hundred men each.

Extremities, such as these, rendered necessary by those of the Republic, and justified by the reflection that our cruel enemy has shewed the first example, will attract numbers of artisans and workmen, of vagabonds and idlers, and even of malefactors; but especial care must be taken not to incorporate them into the legion; they are to be formed into new companies, commanded by French officers, and to the end that the natives may not be acquainted with the force employed, these companies are to be kept asunder, and in ignorance of the details, as far as circumstances will

will permit; it is principally by these new formed companies that the insurrection is to be forwarded.

The commerce of the enemy in the country is to be interrupted by breaking down bridges, cutting of dykes, and ruining causeways, which is, at the same time, essentially necessary for the preservation of the army; by plundering all convoys of subsistence, the public stages and waggons, and even private carriages; the cutting off the supplies of provisions from the principal towns, burning all vessels and boats in the rivers and canals, destroying magazines, setting fire to docks and coal yards, rope walks, great manufactories, &c. &c. It is to be observed, likewise, that by these means a croud of artizans will be thrown out of employment, and of course ready to embark in any measure which holds out to them subsistence and plunder without labour or fatigue.

The success of the expedition will likewise be materially forwarded by disarming the militia, by burning the arsenals in the sea ports, by stopping the couriers of government, by seducing the enemy's troops to desert, and by the terror which the success of the legion and the progress of the insurrection will carry into the bosoms of the unwarlike citizens.

The country most favourable for this system, is that which is naturally strong, and in which there are forges and manufactures.

Subsistence is to be seized wherever it can be found; if any town or village refuse to

supply it in the moment, it is to be given up to immediate pillage.

In order to spread the panic as generally as possible, the legion is to be divided into several columns, having settled a common rendezvous, where they are to assemble every four, six, or eight days; the inhabitants must be obliged to serve as guides, and any who refuse are to be punished on the spot; the magistrates, or some of their families, are always to be employed in preference on this service, that they may not accuse or punish the others.

All denunciations against those who join the legion, are to be punished with death.—Wherever the legion or any of its columns is posted, if the neighbouring parishes do not give instant notice of the approach of the enemy, whether by ringing of bells or otherwise, they are to be given up to fire and sword.

For the safety of the troops under his command, Colonel Tate will avoid, as much as possible, all engagements with regular forces, and will, instead thereof, attack detachments, beat up their quarters, surprize their outposts, &c. He will encourage all deserters and prisoners to enter into the new companies before mentioned; should such prisoners refuse, he will shave their heads and eyebrows, and if they are taken again in arms, they are to be shot.

Colonel Tate will not omit to observe, that there are in England numbers of French,
who

who will be eager to join him, such as prisoners of war, soldiers and sailors, privates in the emigrant regiments, and a croud of others, whom want and the desire of vengeance will draw to his standard; he may admit such Frenchmen into the legion; but he will observe to be on his guard that the new comers may not raise cabals or factions, especially if there should be among them any nobles or priests, whose ambition is only to be exceeded by their cowardice; should any such attempt be made, he will take care to punish it most severely.

Should the militia, or volunteers of any district, oppose the march of the legion, such district is to be severely punished, the militia or volunteers to be disarmed, their arms to be distributed among the insurgents, and all ammunition carefully preserved.

Finally, Colonel Tate will always remember to avail himself of the talents of the principal officers who surround him; he will profit of all favourable circumstances to acquire for his party the force and confidence necessary to ensure success: he will spare, and even sustain, the poor and the aged, the widow and the orphan, and will force the great, who are the cause of all our evils, to sustain the whole burthen of the war:

(Signed) Le Gen. *Le Hoche.*

Secretary of State's Office,
Whitehall, 4th May, 1798.

Compared with the original, *J. King.*

*Copy of the Instructions to Colonel Tate, on his
Military Operations and Marches.*

IT would be imprudent to remain any length of time on the coast, after having effectuated your landing; you will doubtless see the necessity of penetrating into the country, and especially into the counties of Cheshire and Lancashire; not to speak of the opportunities which those counties afford you, by means of the mountains, to avoid the pursuit of the enemy, the field of your operations will be more extended: with boldness and intelligence combined, you may easily possess yourself of Chester or Liverpool, which you will ruin by burning the magazines and filling up the ports, or at least you may cut off all communication between those cities and the interior. There is another object which should likewise decide you to enter those counties, as you will be joined there by two other columns of French troops; to which you will unite that under your command, if the general commanding the expedition in chief shall desire it.

It is therefore of consequence that you direct your march, from the very moment of landing, upon the town of Chester, where you will pass the Dee, beyond which you are to establish yourself.

Your march should be rapid and bold; you must not keep the main roads, but on the contrary proceed by bye paths and hollow ways,

ways, which are at a distance from the high road. Before you enter any village or town, you are to inform yourself whether there be any troops there, and what is their number; whether there be a river, and, if so, whether there be one or more bridges, whether it be inclosed with walls and barriers, &c.; and you are to take your measures in consequence.

You should frequently change your guides, and in order to mislead the enemy as to your destination, you should not take a new one in presence of him whom you dismiss; you should often make countermarches, and always mention to the guide you quit, a road different from that which you mean to take, asking the way to the town or village on which you mean to turn your back, or at least whither you do not mean to go.

In order to spread the consternation and astonishment as wide as possible, after the destruction of Liverpool (for this point is capital) you must follow your blow, and seize upon some small town or sea port on that coast, which you will lay under contribution. You may be sure that immediately all the principal places will demand for their protection troops from the government, which is in want of them, and will of course be obliged to separate those of which it can dispose, by which means you will be able to destroy a great number, by beating in detail the detachments which may be sent against you.

The

The mobiliary columns can alone be successfully opposed to you, but even in that case it will be easy for you to destroy their effect. If they be weak, you will unite your forces and crush them; if they be strong, by scattering yourselves, and committing hostilities in a hundred different quarters; the towns, which will be terrified by these means, will soon demand the troops which compose the columns to protect them from your parties, who will thereby remain masters of the field, and starve both the troops and the inhabitants. I doubt much, whether the English know as yet the nature and use of mobiliary columns, but even if they do, you may find means to render them useless, because the government has not troops in number sufficient to guard all the points at once, and parties like your's may over-run the country in a thousand different directions.

Your soldiers are to carry with them nothing but their arms, ammunition, and bread: They will find every where clothes, linen, and shoes; the inhabitants must supply your wants, and the seats of the gentry are to be your magazines.

In case the country, being exhausted, should offer you no further resources, or that a strong body of troops should force you to quit the place where you had established yourself, you must depart with promptitude and expedition, make forced marches, and in the night, reposing yourselves by day in the woods and mountains; if you are obliged to halt, in
order

order to procure provisions, you must first chuse a strong position, from which you will send detachments into the neighbouring villages ; it is with your cavalry (for you must take care from the first to mount a sufficient number of your troops) that you are to make this kind of excursion; you will also observe to re-mount your cavalry as often as necessity may require it.

Marching in this manner, unincumbered with baggage, your troops cannot be overtaken by the enemy ; but if it should so happen that you are obliged to stand an engagement, you must remember that you are now a Frenchman, inasmuch as you command Frenchmen, and let that incite you to attempt a brilliant stroke ; remember, however, that nothing but inevitable necessity should induce you to hazard the issue of a combat, and in that case you must supply by courage the defect of numbers. Should you be forced to clear your way through the enemy, you must commence the attack, but let it be always by night. About eleven o'clock, or midnight, send out two or three patrols of four or six men each, with orders to set fire to a dozen houses in your rear, in different quarters; the enemy, believing that you are running away, will most probably pursue you, in which case you may lay an ambuscade, or you may avoid him, or you may fall on the rear of one of his columns, which you may cut off with facility, in the dark, and the confusion of an unexpected attack. If the enemy should run to extinction

guish

guish the fires, you have the same advantages; you have your choice, either to avoid him, or, which is still better, to beat him; if he remains under arms, and sends out patrols to reconnoitre, you must interrupt them, and put them to the bayonet, without firing a shot, and then, after two or three hours, you must form the column, and advance rapidly, *ou pas de charge*, on one of his wings, which you will certainly rout, and then, without pushing the affair further, you will pursue your route, and remember to make in that day two or three counter-marches.

In this manner you may, by a brilliant action, surprise in the night time, and cut off a post which may be opposed to you: in the day-light and open field you ought not, with the force under your command, to hesitate to attack two thousand of the enemy, and in the night four or even five thousand: you ought to dislodge eight hundred from a post, not being intrenched; but if intrenched, and especially with cannon, you are not to attack them.

In order to pass a river, where the bridges are guarded or broken down, if you cannot procure boats, you must endeavour to remount towards the source, in order to find a passage by means of a ford, a mill-dam, &c. If you are hard pressed, you must strain a stout rope from one bank to the other, and pass your troops; those who do not know how to swim, holding fast by the rope, and carrying their firelocks slung over their shoulders, with the muzzle

muzzle downwards to avoid wetting the lock; if trees can be found on the bank, long enough to reach across, they are still better than ropes; in which case you will fell several of them. If the river, though fordable, be so deep as to take the soldiers up to their necks, you must make the best swimmers pass first, and the others follow by ranks, each soldier holding the next man strongly with the left hand by the skirt of the coat, and carrying his firelock in the right: by these means those who reach the opposite bank first will sustain the others, and assist them in getting out of the water: your horses will also be of use, but you must not reckon upon them.

In case your position should be at last no longer tenable, or that superior forces should force you to quit the country, bordering on the channel, you must not lose an instant to join two French parties sent into the counties of York, Durham, and Northumberland. In that case you must send me notice into Ireland, that I may be enabled to execute a diversion in your favour. An officer in disguise may reach me, either by seizing a fishing boat on the coast of Wales, or else by the route of Scotland.

I count upon your firmness and your courage; you may equally rely upon the gratitude of the French nation, and my esteem and regard in particular.

My intention in giving you these instructions is less that you should attach yourself to the letter,

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letter, than to the spirit of what they contain ;
and I leave to your judgement to make such
modification therein as circumstances may
render necessary.

(Signed) Le Gen. *Le Hocke.*

Secretary of State's Office,
Whitehall, 4th May, 1798.

Compared with the original, *J. King.*

THE END.
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tribute to render it more generally conducive to the great end he has in view—the counteracting the designs of the French Faction in this country, by supplying the Lower Classes of Society, at a cheap rate, with the means of acquiring constitutional knowledge, and rational information.

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